



SO, YOU MIGHT WANT TO BE LIONS DISTRICT GOVERNOR

PRESENTED BY:

PAST DISTRICT GOVERNOR MERCY B. WALTERS

COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS IN LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

- **LCI:** Lions Clubs International.
- **MD4:** Multiple District Four (15 Lions Districts of California).
The 4th General area that joined Lions Clubs.
- **DG:** District Governor.
- **VDG:** Vice District Governor.
- **COG:** Council Of Governors (15 Governors and the 30 VDGs).
- **CC:** Council Chair (The elected PDG who organizes and runs the COG).
- **PDG:** Past District Governor.
- **LCIF:** Lions Clubs International Foundation (Our Humanitarian Arm).
- **MJF:** Melvin Jones Fellow (Holder of the Award named for our Founder on behalf of LCIF).
- **PMJF:** Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow (holder of additional levels of MJF).

Lions of San Diego and Imperial Counties

So, you want to be a Lions District Governor

- Welcome to this session designed to inform you of the position of Lions District Governor. Your consideration to become informed is wise. Your future may well include a three-year journey as 2nd and 1st Vice District Governor and District Governor. Even if your eventual decision is to do otherwise, I hope you'll learn some important facts and opinions.
- Truly, one of the greatest honors that a Lion can have is to be elected as the “Administrative and Inspirational Leader” of his/her District. It takes more than just the desire to be recognized as a district leader and to be honored at all functions. You must be willing to commit and give freely of your time to provide to the Lions, Lioness, and Leos of your district the support and leadership required to meet their individual needs.
- Our task here is to help you choose to do so, based on your ability to give.

What might you be giving?

- **1 Time.** From the moment you are elected by your fellow Lions to be 2nd VDG, you will have more demands on your time. The Lions Clubs International Constitution and By-Laws, Article 3, Duties of District Officers, Section 2&3, gives 12 general duties that the 2nd VDG is to perform. These duties are pretty onerous, but the seated CC and COG's will clarify them and suggest those that need your attention. Regular, sufficient office hours are a must! If you will still be employed, consider the impact on your job!
- **2 Unique Ideas.** Your specific talents and abilities will come into play as you design your year. Use your powers of observation and evaluation in your years as 2nd VDG and 1st VDG to help you choose those persons you will call upon to serve on your cabinet with you. At the same time, plan your events with the same mindset. You might ask, "How can I use what I see to help my District improve and be even better during my year."

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- **3. Preparation.** Ensure that you have trained and prepared for the leadership skills necessary to be a successful as a DG. Use the enclosed guide, “Thoughts on Preparing for a Spectacular Year as a Lions DG.
- **4. MONEY:** How much? There is no simple answer. The outflow will depend on your individual approach. It’s safe to say that you will not receive as much as you will spend. Remember, this Lions habit of ours is an expensive hobby.
 - **A. Income**
 - **1.** Personal savings.
 - **2.** Club stipend, in some cases.
 - **3.** District monies; in most cases for VDG and DG years there are allocations in your district’s budget for stipends or reimbursable expenses.

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- **5.** You should have **Business Cards** for each position as you move up from 2nd VDG to District Governor. No person will remember your name without a **Business Card**. 2nd and 1st VDG at least 150, District Governor, 250.
- **6. Rules of Reimbursement.** These monies are payable to you for certain, specific events you will attend. They are currently based on \$75/night for lodging, \$.50/mile travel by auto, and up to \$50/day for meals. Remember, these reimbursements are paid only when the paperwork is submitted to the MD or to LCI, to include the proper form and receipts. Also, only a limited of days are allowed for each event, not necessarily all those days it takes for you to get there and/or return home.

ON THE EXPENSE SIDE

1. Clothing: tuxedo (guys), sport coat, slacks, dresses, suit(s), ties, shoes, your “District & Council Uniform,” etc.
2. Hosting: Your guests to your district events will create opportunities to spend money on events, extra travel, and gifts.
3. Meals.
4. Auto expenses: The \$.50/mile will cover only part of your expenses to transport you and your spouse.
5. Impact on your income: If you will still be employed, be sure to plan ahead and calculate how you will combine your job with your Lions DG duties.
6. Awards of gifts are appropriate in different occasions.
7. Social gatherings are a great opportunity to get to learn of your Council and other leaders in your District and MD.

IMPACT ON YOUR FAMILY

- As a 2nd and 1st VDG it is very important that you and your spouse attend as many of the COG meetings as possible.
- You and your district will benefit from the experiences you have and the knowledge you gain.
- If there are children at home, it is unavoidable that your time to interact with them will be reduced.
- They are welcome at many (but not all) of the events you will attend. There will be a lot of meetings and time consuming travel within your district and outside of it!

FAMILY (PAGE# 2)

- Your spouse's importance cannot be overstated.
- Your enjoyment, satisfaction and success will be enhanced with the active engagement of your spouse and the support that can be given to you.
- Those without a spouse can often enlist an administrative assistant to help in organization and administration.
- MD4 provides a "Spouse's Handbook," and a workshop for spouses to help him/her understand the role of the DG spouse.

CONCIL OF GOVERNOR (COG) MEETINGS

- COG meetings are held on a regular basis.
- 1. The June (always the 1st weekend of the that month) meeting is when you as 2nd VDG-elect (and your spouse will be introduced formally; committee assignments are announced, and the Student Speakers final is held.
- 2. The August (again the 1st weekend of the month) meeting.
- 3. The Fall meeting is held in either October or November.
- 4. The mid-winter meeting is held in February on the site of the MD4 Convention, just prior to the Convention.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES OF MD4

- During your years as a VDG, you will receive a lot of training from our committees at each COG meetings you attend. This training will better prepare you to assume the role of leaders of your districts.
- 1. Understand the role, responsibility, and commitment of the DG.
- 2. Have the opportunity to get acquainted with your fellow council members and their spouses.
- 3. Have an increased comprehension of Lions MD4 and district service activities and their administration.

TRAINING PAGE 2

- 4. Develop a working knowledge of the reporting forms both to and from LCI and MD4.
- 5. Be able to set well-defined goals for your year as DG.
- 6. Learn appropriate protocol.
- 7. Discuss new and innovative ideas for membership development.
- 8. Review sample budgets of both the district and multiple district levels.
- 9. Experience making introductions as well as giving and accepting presentations.

IN CONCLUSION

- The office of the Lions District Governor is one which many of us have enjoyed and hold as one of the highlights of our lives.
- We joined with our council, rising to deal with mutual challenges.
- We have traveled to all parts of California and across the United States, then overseas, in many cases.
- We have met Lions from around the world and have made friends with Lions from every time zone.
- I encourage you to accept the challenges of DG, then in later years, to savor your accomplishments as a Past District Governor.
- Yes, some day you'll be able to take the "PDG Pledge," and say the revered words, "When I was DG...."

ENCLOSURES

- Article II, Sec. 6 of the Constitution and By-Laws, Standard District, International Association of Lions Clubs, revised June 29, 2021.
- “Thoughts on Preparing for a Spectacular Year as Lions District Governor,” by Past District Governor Mercy B. Walters.



**“Thoughts on preparing for a spectacular
year as Governor of a Lions District, presented to
you as a structure for success.**

by

Past District Governor Mercy B. Walters

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS

This is presented as a checklist of the general order of actions by which a Lion prepares to be a District Governor (DG). You, specifically, may fit in anywhere on this list, not necessarily at #1.

- **1.** Attend district events when you can. Approach the district meetings and activities open-mindedly. Use your experience from your club's meetings, projects and fundraisers as a reference point for your observation and evaluation of district meetings and events. Attend District Conventions.
- **2.** Allow yourself to make friends with other Lions and spouses who you will meet at district events.
- **3.** Learn the many functions of the district.
- **4.** After attendance at several district meetings, your ideas for change might be helpful.
- **5.** Continue to evaluate the need for changes to improve the district as you serve it.
- **6.** Develop a network of friends beyond your club level.
- **7.** Continue to serve your club, attaining the level of President.
- **8.** Serve as a Zone Chair. Host a student speakers contest.

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS (PAGE#2)

- **9.** Serve as a Region Chair. Host a student speakers contest. Host a cabinet meeting, if appropriate in your district.
- **10.** Observe successfully/or unsuccessful district leaders. Note the traits of each.
- **11.** Learn from the “mistakes” you observe.
- **12.** Plan for your future as a DG: Who do you want as key officers? Whom can you rely for advice? Approximately when in your life can you fulfill the obligations? Get the full and complete support of your spouse!! This could well be #1 in the list, could it not? If you don't the support, maybe the whole thing is not a good idea for you.
- **13.** Attend a USA-Canada Leadership Forum, if you can. Your district may pay a stipend towards your attendance as a VDG.
- **14.** Attend a MD4 Leadership Institute, if possible.
- **15.** Attend the MD4 Convention(s).
- **16.** Attend a Lions International Convention(s), if possible.
- **17.** Feel out your club members for their support. Inform them of your possible service and your desire for support from them. Be prepared emotionally for the spectrum of answers you might get, from “full support to no support.”

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS (PAGE#3)

- **18.** Commit and begin your quest for the position of District Governor.
- **19.** When it's time (in the fall or winter of the year), you'll need to get your club board to vote to nominate you for 2nd VDG and to send a letter to the nominations and elections chair for reading at the appropriate cabinet meeting of the year are facing election at the convention. NOTE: you will need a letter of nomination from your club's board each year that you are to face a vote (2nd VDG, 1st VD, and DG year).
- **20.** After election, you'll need to attend the June Council of Governor's meeting. You'll receive partial re-payment for your expenses. Remember, that's the level at which you are to be reimbursed for all your DG/VDG service. They're called "Rules of Reimbursement." They do not cover all of your expenses. This is an expensive hobby that you have undertaken!!
- **21.** As a VDG, please be aware that you'll be expected to "dress the part." For men or spouses, that means you'll need a suit and a tuxedo (with all the fixin's). The tux needs to have a black and white coat. It is cheaper to just buy it, as you will be using it a at least twice a year for years to come. For ladies, that means a couple of formal dresses and/or business attire. Your council uniform, district uniform, ties, shoes, etc., all become necessary items.

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS (PAGE#4)

- **22.** As 2nd and 1st VDG, observe and plan!! Help the DG, whenever possible. Visit as many clubs as possible, especially in regions other than your own. The 1st VDG (usually) has an opportunity to sit in on budget meetings for your DG year's budget. Think about specific adjustments to the budget that you want in order to accomplish your goals. Lobby to get these in prior to your year as DG.
- **23.** 1st and 2nd VDG years are there for you to plan lots of big and small things like you pin, banner, letterhead, etc. Check your district budget to determine your district's level of support. You may to pay for the "extra touches" you desire.
- **24.** A 1st VDG needs to put together his/her cabinet officers---the sooner the better. Ask permission of your seated DG to select your officers early. My suggested deadline is no later than your district convention prior to your DG year, but it's even better to try to be done a few months before the convention. Remember, the directory chair needs time to get the directory done accurately, so that you and your clubs have it at your first cabinet meeting, traditionally in July.

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS (PAGE 5)

- **25.** A 1st VDG needs to organize his/her year on a calendar, preferably by February 1st. A district officer retreat with you incoming officers is a great thing to do by April 1st. This allows you and your Secretary, Treasurer, Region Chairs, and possibly Zone Chairs to communicate and plan cabinet meetings, visitations, and programs. The Region Chairs need time to set up locations, facilities, and host clubs for the cabinet meeting in their respective region. NOTE: not all districts do cabinet meetings via the region chairs. Your “uniform,” visitation protocol, and overall personal program and objectives can no be in place.
- **26.** Did I mention plan? Other things to be planned are your year’s convention theme, guests to your cabinet meetings and convention, and your end-of-the-year “thank you” gathering and gifts.

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS (PAGE 6)

- **27.** Your expense as District Governor are reimbursed to you by LCI (Lions Clubs International) office in Oakbrook, Illinois. Go there some time if you can. It's a gorgeous place and they do a great for us. As District Governor you receive "Rules of Reimbursement," like when you were the VDG, but you get some other things covered as well. If you visit clubs, there is a procedure and special form to use. If you authorize a VDG to visit as your representative in your place, you must submit the paperwork on her/his behalf. Remember to be accurate in any paperwork that you submit to LCI. They are "sticklers." Be totally honest with them!!!

STRUCTURE FOR SUCCESS (PAGE 7)

- **28.** Your attendance at your in-coming (DG-elect) International Convention is an event where nearly everything is paid for you!
LOVE IT!
- **29.** Since you've planned, now execute, and be flexible! Also, enjoy yourself! As a Lions District Governor you will have more "friends" than you've probably ever had in your life.
- **30.** Remember, your Lions District loves you! They want you and your year to be successful. Your planning will be appreciated by them and you can achieve what you set out to do. But, be sure to enjoy your year, your district clubs and your experience as **LIONS DISTRICT GOVERNOR!!**